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Review of *Writing Indian, Native Conversations* by John Lloyd Purdy

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known as DIAC. DIAC serves as a critical tool with which to further investigate Native literatures.

Most instructive in the exploration is Purdy's critical application of DIAC to the selected works of Momaday, Welch, Erdrich, Vizenor, Owens, and others. While it does open doors to a consideration of a new critical theory from which to interpret Native American literature, the real power in this book resides in the conversations as the authors discuss Native American narrative and its continuance in literature and film. As Paula Gunn Allen recognizes, the literature has achieved a level of legitimacy within the literary field and there are "enough people out there doing enough variety of things, with some real solid approaches, that are useful to the Native people as well as to the literary community." Through these conversations the reader is given a rare opportunity to consider the varying perspectives critically. Each author, in her or his own way, addresses the issues of the purpose and significance of Native American literature. Furthermore, the book's historical perspective gives credence to the assertion that it is through the stories and the conversations that people define themselves within cultural, historical, and political contexts. It is through the conversations that the reader is able to, in Purdy's words, "converse with respect, and dignity, through all our relations." *Writing Indian, Native Conversations* contributes to the critical discourse in Native American literature.

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Writing Indian, Native Conversations. By John Lloyd Purdy. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009. xvii + 282 pp. Bibliography, index \$45.00.

Writing Indian, Native Conversations provides keen discussion across three decades of Native American literature in the twentieth century along with consideration of literature in the new millennium. Interviews with well-known Native American scholars and authors such as Paula Gunn Allen, Simon Ortiz, Gerald Vizenor, Sherman Alexie, and Louis Owens provide a foreground from which Purdy delves more deeply into the works of Silko, Welch, Erdrich, King, Vizenor, and others. The critical, theoretical framework from which he analyzes the works is based on a construct that has at its core the assumption that "we all come to a work of literature with a 'lens,' a critical-cultural orientation," which evokes a multiplicity of interpretations and responses from readers. Purdy's "four-part theory of elemental, structural traits of Native texts" is rooted in the following elements: *differentiation*, *investigation*, *affirmation*, and *continuance*, also